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GOVERNOR'S OFFICE FOR CHILDREN

TRANSITION REPORT

I. HISTORY

From the beginning of his first term, Governor Babbitt gave substance to the concept that Arizona's children and their families deserve the determined effort of all of its citizens.

In April 1978, the Governor signed an Executive Order creating the twenty-one member Governor's Council on Children, Youth and Families to assist and advise him and the agencies of State Government on matters related to children and their families; to organize community efforts around major issues of statewide concern; to facilitate the coordination of federal, state and local policies concerning services to children and their families; and to develop and to maintain information regarding the need for services.

In order to assure effective coordination among the state and local agencies, in 1982 the Governor created by Executive Order the twenty-one member Interagency Advisory Council on Children, Youth and Families (IAAC) and the Cabinet Committee on Children, Youth and Families to be staffed out of the office of the Governor's Council on Children, Youth and Families. The purpose of this Council and the Cabinet Committee was to assist the Governor in coordination, planning and advocacy among private and public agencies and organizations.

And finally in March 1986, by Executive Order, Governor Babbitt created the Governor's Office for Children. This Office, which realized the dream of hundreds of Child Advocates around Arizona, combined the staff and resources of the Governor's Council on Children, Youth and Families, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Advisory Council and the Department of Correction's Bureau of Juvenile Crime Prevention. Through this Office, the Governor acknowledged the need for a single, strong voice within the Executive Branch to focus on the full continuum of interrelated programs affecting children and youth, and to serve as an advocacy voice in state policymaking.

II. SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Over the past eight years, through Council efforts and the Governor's strong support, a broad based and effective citizen constituency to promote improved programs and services to Arizona's children and families has been developed and institutionalized, culminating in the creation of the Governor's Office for Children. Significant and nationally recognized legislation has been passed to improve Arizona's child welfare system. Child and family issues have been placed on the top of the agenda for Arizona's policymakers and the media. Additionally, public/private partnerships have been created resulting in contributions from Salt River Project, American Express, IBM, the Junior League of Phoenix, the Wilson Foundation, the Arizona Community Foundation and the Valley National Bank. These contributions have been used to help support the Council's publications, projects and conferences.



CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT TO AFFECT CHANGE

Many of the achievements of the Governor's Council on Children, Youth and Families were accomplished through the numerous task forces and committees staffed out of the Council Office. Through eight years, approximately 100 citizen volunteers deliberated on child and family issues. These Task Forces and Committees included:

- * The 4-C Task Force on Institutional and Family Foster Care of Children (4-C Committee was precursor to the Governor's Council on Children, Youth and Families). This Task Force was created in 1976 to confront the serious problems in Arizona's Foster Care system, particularly institutional care of children. (In 1976 over 34 percent of all foster children were in institutions.) This effort concluded in 1978 with a major report recommending a significant overhaul in Arizona's Foster Care system. In 1978, the Governor and the Director of the Department of Economic Security (DES) concluded an extraordinary effort was needed to resolve the problem of children being unnecessarily institutionalized, and to confront allegations regarding child abuse in those institutions. (DES licensed these institutions.) A project team was established, staffed out of the Governor's Council on Children, Youth and Families, which resulted in at least five institutions either closing or having licenses revoked, and a 30 percent reduction in placements of dependent children in these institutions.
- * The Business Task Force on Child Care was created by the Council in 1981 as a vehicle for Arizona's business and industry to study child care issues and to make recommendations about the shared responsibility for child care among parents, government and the private sector. In April 1982, a final report was issued.
- * Arizona was the only state in the country that did not require some form of state licensure for agencies that place children for adoption. The twenty-five member Adoption Agency Licensing Committee, which included representatives from the local and state Bar and private adoption agencies, researched and developed legislation to license Arizona's adoption agencies. On May 2, 1985, SB 1271 was signed by the Governor.
- * The purpose of the thirty-seven member Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Reduction Task Force was to take a structured and comprehensive look at the Child Protective Services system, with specific focus on child abuse and neglect prevention and reduction. Six public hearings were held around the state. An interim report was submitted in December 1984 addressing preliminary findings and recommendations. The final report, published in June 1984, provided a progress report of the interim recommendations and reflected positive changes in many areas.
- * In January 1985, the Governor appointed the thirty member School-Age Child Care Task Force to respond to the "hidden problems of latch-key children".

 The first conference on School-Age Child Care was held in March 1985 and in June 1985, a "How to Manual" was published to assist organizations and school

districts in establishing programs. The Task Force was highly influential in the creation of 150 new programs in Arizona.

- * The purpose of the thirty-five member Governor's Child Care Coalition, convened in December 1985, is to develop a comprehensive long-range child care plan for Arizona that reflects consensus on practical and philosophical matters and focuses on increasing the availability of affordable, quality child care throughout Arizona. The coalition produced a publication, "The Status of Child Care in Arizona", in March 1986. In November 1986, a final report will be presented to the Governor.
- * A twenty-five member Advisory Council to the Governor's Office regarding the full continuum of children, youth and family programs within the government was established in April 1986.

INTERAGENCY CASE MANAGEMENT PROJECT

A major accomplishment of the Governor's Interagency Advisory Council on Children, Youth and Families was the creation and development in Maricopa County of the Interagency Case Management Project (ICMP). ICMP is a coordinated case management project which includes staff from the State Departments of Economic Security (Administration of Children, Youth and Families and Division of Developmental Disabilities), Health Services, Corrections and the Maricopa County Juvenile Court. The purpose of the ICMP is to deliver services to problem juveniles and their families using interagency resources and an interdisciplinary approach with few bureaucratic restrictions. The project is managed by a "policy team" composed of representatives from the Departments of Economic Security, Health Services, and Corrections, the Maricopa County Juvenile Court and the Governor's Office for Children. It is a unique project which has received state and national attention and inquiries.

LEGISLATION

The impact of the Governor's Council on Children, Youth and Families and its numerous citizen's task forces and committees on child and family legislation has been considerable. The various citizen task forces and councils throughout the years have taken positions on legislation and have effectively testified and lobbied.

More importantly, however, significant legislation was initiated, developed, promoted and passed due to the efforts of the Governor's Council on Children, Youth and Families and its volunteer task forces and committees. These include:

- * Mandatory training of foster parents (ARS 8-509).
- * Foster Care Review Boards (ARS 8-515.01). Arizona was one of the first states in the country to mandate citizen review boards to review the cases of children in foster care every six months. The purpose of these boards (administered out of the Arizona Supreme Court), is to find permanent homes for each foster child in Arizona by working with the DES Case Worker and making recommendations to the Court. This law has become a national model.
- * During the 1983 Special Session on Corrections, a \$2.96 million appropriation was made to DES for community-based child abuse prevention programming.

This funding is now in the DES base budget and is unique nationally in that it is explicitly directed toward <u>prevention</u> of child abuse through community-based agencies (ARS 8-550.01).

- * Adoption Agency Licensure, which mandates that agencies and individuals that provide adoption services be licensed through DES (ARS 8-126).
- * An Amendment to Community Schools Legislation to explicitly permit schools to operate before- and after-school programs (ARS 15-1105).
- * Restrictions were removed from the "check-off" on the State Income Tax form for Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Fund (ARS 43-613).

III. MAJOR CURRENT PROJECTS

- * The Governor's Child Care Coalition: By November 1986, the Governor's Office for Children, through the Child Care Coalition, will develop a report to the Governor that will serve as the outline for child care in Arizona over the next twenty years. (The Coalition Status Report on Child Care in Arizona was published in March 1986).
- * Children's Mental Health: By December 1986, the Governor's Office for Children will develop comprehensive recommendations regarding the funding and delivery of mental health services to Arizona's children and adolescents.
- * "Let's Talk" Campaign: Through the fall of 1986 Council staff will continue to be involved with this community effort designed to begin a dialogue about the causes and prevention of teen pregnancy and early childbearing.
- * Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies: The goal of the coalition is to take a comprehensive look at the need for perinatal services statewide, and continue to heighten public awareness through the efforts of local coalitions. Office for Children staff is involved in leadership roles in this effort.
- * Governor's Reading Campaign: With the assistance of the Phoenix Advertising Club, which adopted this campaign as its year-long voluntary effort, the campaign to "Make Reading a Family Affair" was launched by the Governor in October 1986. The Office for Children is directing this effort which will include significant media coverage to encourage parents to read to their children.
- * Chemical Abuse: The Office staff will participate in the School Chemical Abuse Interagency Committee which was developed to implement SB 1248, the legislation providing funds for alcohol education in Arizona schools. During the next year the committee will develop long-range plans for further programming in Arizona, present a statewide team training event, hold another series of regional workshops for educators, and develop a statewide peer leadership project for high school students.
- * Status Offenders: A major Governor's Office for Children effort will be implemented through the State Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Advisory Council to analyze and make recommendations on the issue of

services to status offenders.

- * Teen Pregnancy: The Governor's Office for Children will co-sponsor with the Department of Health Services a major conference on issues regarding teenage pregnancy.
- * Child Support Guidelines: The Governor's Committee on Child Support Guidelines, staffed out of the Office For Children, will present recommended statewide guidelines to the Governor by December 1986.

IV. FUTURE ISSUES

In general, the effects of the changing family structure on children and programs necessary to meet dramatically new needs must be addressed over the next twenty years. For example, will the traditional American value system which has thus far seen child care as a parental responsibility shift enough to allow for the building of a child care system that is responding to the rapidly changing demographics? Within this context the following decisions will need to be made:

- * The determination of the respective responsibilities of local, state and federal governments and the private sector to assist children and families at risk;
- * The development of a funding system for child day care options that reflect quality and affordability;
- * The development of coordination mechanisms between state and local agencies to eliminate gaps and duplication in programs and services;
- * Confronting the effects of reduced federal dollars on child and family programs;
- * Finding solutions to the poverty problems facing Arizona's children and families;
- * Confronting the effects of a bleak childhood experience for a large percentage of the U.S. population entering parenting age in the year 2000;
- * The determination of ways to mobilize resources to invest in proven children's preventive programs (prenatal care, health care, good child care, early childhood education, etc.) while at the same time dealing with the cost of the increasing numbers of "at risk" children and families needing services;
- * The determination of the role of the public schools in early childhood education.

